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INTERIOR EXTENDS TIME LIMIT FOR COMMENTS ON PROPOSED RULING ON CABIN SITE PERMITS

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today announced a 1½-month extension--to October 1--of the period for receiving public comments on his Department's proposal to terminate cabin site permits on the fish and wildlife areas and public recreation lands it administers.

The proposal was printed in the <u>Federal Register</u> July 15, with a deadline of August 14 for submitting comments to the Department. Several permit holders requested more time to consider the proposal.

In announcing the extension, Secretary Udall said:

"Many of the comments received by the Department of the Interior concerned cabin permits on National Forests and various other Federal lands. Our proposal, however, covers only lands administered by Interior. It does not cover National Forests, Corps of Engineer impoundments, and similar recreational areas administered by other Departments or agencies of the Federal Government."

Permits for cabins have been issued in the past on several National Wildlife Refuges and the Interior Department recreational areas. These residences usually fall into one of two categories: Privately owned and located on Interior Department lands under a permit, usually for not long than 20 years; or, Government-owned buildings acquired with the land and privately occupied under an annual permit.

Basically, the proposed new policies would provide that no permit for a privately owned cabin could be terminated before or renewed after, either January 1, 1971 or 20 years from the date of substantial improvements to the property, whichever is later. Where substantial improvements have been made on the property, permits expiring before January 1, 1971, would be extended to that date or until there has been 20 years' use of the improvements.

No permits would extend beyond July 1, 1985.

Permits for use of Government-owned cabins on these public sites automatically would be revewed annually before January 1, 1968. All such permits would be terminated on that date.

If adopted, the proposed plan would not affect occupancy by private individuals whose rights were reserved by court action.

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